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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 BAGHDAD 003205

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/14/2019

TAGS: PGOV PREL I2

SUBJECT: RRT ERBIL: GORAN (CHANGE) LEADERSHIP ON KURDISH NATIONAL ISSUES, KIRKUK AND ELECTIONS

BAGHDAD 00003205 001.3 OF 003

Classified By: RRT Erbil Team Leader Andrew Snow for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (U) This is an RRT Erbil cable.

¶2. (C) Summary. Goran (aka Change) Movement leadership has consistently said in meetings with USG officials that it does not want to be seen as differing with the two main Kurdish parties, the Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP) and Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), on national issues. However, its perspective on the relative importance of Kurdish priorities is not entirely consistent with the KDP/PUK and at times Goran's oppositionist desire to undermine the ruling parties causes them to posture as more ardent defenders of core Kurdish concerns. Goran's top priority is implementation of Article 140 and an eventual referendum on Kirkuk's status. If some manner of "special status" for Kirkuk helps create an environment in which Article 140 implementation can proceed, Goran leaders are not opposed. They are convinced that other Kurdish priorities -- hydrocarbon legislation, budget allocations to the KRG and integration of Peshmerga into the Iraqi Army -- that are also sticking points in the Kurdish relationship wiQ3DUZB